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Modern Religious Problems

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THE FUNCTION OF THE CHURCH IN MODERN SOCIETY

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THE FUNCTION OF THE CHURCH IN MODERN SOCIETY

INTRODUCTORY

Of the various ministries through which the Christian Church has from time to time wrought effectively in society there are two, which, if exercised fully and in right relation to one another, may be expected to fulfill in very large degree the function of the Church in modern society, — the ministry of spiritual authority and the ministry of human sympathy. Modern society as related to the Church is peculiar only in the fact that its demands are very exacting at these two points. Not many things are demanded of the Church to-day. Probably there was never a period in which fewer obligations were imposed upon it, or when its advice was less frequently sought on

matters of current interest and concern. But in view of the intellectual and social confusion of the present times, which we call modern in other respects than in regard to time, the original and normal claims upon the Church for authority and for sympathy have been greatly intensified. The demand for sympathy seems to be greater than the demand for authority. Society appears to be more concerned about the relation of man to man than about the relation of the individual man to his God, or to his own soul. It is doubtful, however, if this appearance altogether expresses the underlying reality. The cry for bread is always startling, never more so than in days of wasteful plenty; but it is vain to assume that those who have bread enough and to spare are otherwise satisfied. The voice of such as are "striving to reach forward to the new light of the intellect, while not relinquishing the ancient loyalties of the

heart,"[1] is often heard in unexpected places, implying wherever heard "the tragic element of suffering." But the claims upon the Church for spiritual authority and for human sympathy are alike so constant and so pressing, and they are in reality so closely related, that the Church can at no time allow these essential and mutually supporting ministries to decline or to be separated. The history of the Church proves by too frequent illustration how empty a thing is authority without sympathy, and how weak a thing is sympathy without authority.

It is the office of this brief essay to urge upon the Church the resumption of that spiritual authority, which has been in measure suspended during the recent period of theological reconstruction, and to urge no less the return to that sympathetic concern in human interests, that fellow feeling with men, the absence of which at certain points

[1] *Letters to His Holiness Pope Pius X.*, Preface, p. xv.

has caused much alienation from the Church. Doubtless the Church is farther on its way toward regaining spiritual authority than it is toward recovering the alienated classes. The process of theological investigation, criticism, and reconstruction made possible, as well as necessary, by the growth of the scientific spirit, has been going on for nearly a generation. But it is a question if the Church has as yet begun to understand and appreciate the religious significance of the problems involved in the economic changes which have been taking place within the same period, but more manifestly within the past decade.

I

THE MINISTRY OF SPIRITUAL AUTHORITY

In discussing this aspect of our subject reference will be made altogether to the churches of the Protestant faith, and chiefly, for local reasons, to the churches of this country. The place of the Roman Catholic Church in modern society, especially in this country, calls for very definite recognition, but the discussion of its authority is foreign to our purpose except as an aid in setting forth the authority of Protestantism. In this regard it is becoming more and more necessary to the understanding of Protestantism to understand Catholicism. To the average Protestant, the authority of the Papacy has no logical place in modern society. It seems to be an intellectual anachronism. But the fact that it is maintaining and enlarging its place

in the most modern of the nations is a fact too evident to be denied, and therefore a fact which ought to be understood.

Allowing that the growth of the Roman Catholic Church in America is chiefly due to immigration, its growth is the more striking as an example of the holding power of Catholicism under modern conditions. Of course the explanation lies in the distinction which Catholicism draws, and which it seems to be able to maintain, between modern thought and "modernism" — modern thought becoming "modernism" only as it invades the realm of dogmatic religion. The devout Catholic may be modern in politics, in science, and in literature, provided he does not thereby become a "modernist." To what extent the spirit of "modernism," that is, the desire to apply historical criticism or any applicable form of scientific analysis to the traditional theology of the Church, is really infecting Catholicism, it is

impossible to determine. The "modernists" of Europe complain of the backwardness of their brethren in this country. This backwardness cannot be attributed to the fact that American Catholics are untouched by "the liberties and knowledge of the twentieth century." More likely the general freedom of thought which the American Roman Catholic enjoys serves to dull rather than to quicken his desire for greater freedom in his religious thinking. The fundamental difference between an intelligent Protestant and an equally intelligent Catholic centres around the actual use of the right of private judgment. Each uses this right in his own way. The intelligent Protestant uses it continuously, never for a moment surrendering it to any outward authority. The intelligent Catholic uses it once for all in surrendering it to the authority of the Church. This act of surrendering one's private judgment in matters of faith to the

judgment of the Church may be in itself a supreme act of private judgment, earnest, protracted, and satisfying. To many minds the argument for such a surrender is persuasive and convincing. "Given the revelation of God in Christianity, what more natural than that this revelation should be committed to the Church: and if thus committed, how much better the authorized judgment of the Church in all matters of faith than the judgment of the individual: how much safer the investment of one's religious belief in the Church than if held among one's private securities."

Doubtless there are many cases in which it is not fully understood at the beginning just how much this acceptance of the judgment of the Church in place of the continuous use of private judgment really means. Experience alone can show in any realizing sense that it means one thing and one thing only, — submission, absolute and complete

submission. The language, however, of the Roman Catholic Church is perfectly clear at this point, whether uttered in pastoral address or in the formal definition of its authority. "My brethren," says Cardinal Mercier in his Lenten Pastoral of 1908, following the Papal Encyclical on Modernism, "we have here merely a question of honesty. Yes or no? Do you believe in the divine authority of the Church? Do you accept exteriorly and interiorly what in the name of Jesus Christ she proposes to your belief? Yes or no? If yes, then she puts the sacraments at your disposal and undertakes your safe conduct to heaven. If no, you deliberately break the bond that united you to her, of which she had tied and blessed the knot. Before God and your conscience you belong to her no more." [1]

[1] Lenten Pastoral of Cardinal Mercier, Primate of Belgium, in enforcement of the Encyclical Pascendi of September 8, 1907, on Modernism: given in full in *Mediævalism*, a reply to Cardinal Mercier by Father Tyrrell.

Compare with this the language of the Right Reverend Monsignor Vaughan in the more formal definition of the authority of the Papacy. "When Peter speaks *ex-cathedra* he speaks with the infallible authority conferred on him by God. And Peter still lives and still speaks in the person of his successor. What he binds on earth is bound in heaven. If he defines a doctrine — let us say the immaculate conception of the Blessed Virgin — what happens? So soon as he defines it, he binds it upon the consciences of all Catholics. They are obliged to accept it."[1] Such an assertion and acceptance of authority can be understood by a Protestant only as he reminds himself of the process of surrender and submission which these assume. More than this, he must also remind himself of that temper and disposition of mind upon which

[1] "The Catholic Church: What is it?" By the Right Reverend Monsignor Vaughan, Rome. *Hibbert Journal*, April, 1908.

a religion of absolute authority is based. Religions of this order endure because the type of mind which supports them persists. The authority of the Papacy survived Protestantism, though under the conditions of its survival it lost control of the governing mind of the world. Another conception of religious authority took control of the peoples committed thenceforth to the defense and extension of religious liberty. Protestantism meant more historically, and far more in principle, than the transfer of obedience from an infallible Church to an infallible Bible. The recent biographer of Karl Marx, in explaining the conversion of the elder Marx from Judaism to Christianity, says that "he seemed to have looked upon Protestantism as being something more than the intellectual and spiritual protest of religious enthusiasts against dogma and ecclesiastical authority: as being in fact a movement for intellectual freedom and

general progress." [1] This view of Protestantism, though partial, is not superficial. Intense as were the religious demands which made Protestantism necessary, and powerful as were the political forces which gave it so wide a supremacy, the spirit of Protestantism was closely akin to that spirit of intellectual freedom which gave us democracy and modern education. The advance of religious, political, and educational liberty has been in the main an advance through comradeship. Protestantism has come to represent preëminently that part of organized Christianity which lies open to the mind of the world, and which feels most sensitively the intellectual progress of the world, whether the sources of progress lie within or without Christianity. It does not forbid its adherents from entering with sympathetic interest into that "extra-Chris-

[1] John Spargo: *Karl Marx, His Life and Work*, pp. 23, 24.

tian world," in which Mr. Huxley used to say that he and persons of like interests spent much of their time in the investigation of subjects which were "neither Christian nor unchristian." Protestantism stands committed not only to the doctrine of the right of private judgment, but also to the general and far-reaching belief that religious progress is dependent upon intellectual freedom in matters of religion. It would be cowardly for Protestants to deny any of the legitimate consequences of their intellectual affiliations or of their sympathies with liberty. The greatest consequence, as they believe, is religious progress. A consequence which is quite sure to appear in time of intellectual upheaval and confusion is a certain loss of spiritual authority. At such times authority waits in part upon the readjustment of faith to the larger and clearer knowledge.

Without question the churches of the

Protestant faith have been passing through a period of serious intellectual disturbance, with a consequent loss of authority. The authority which rests upon experience and upon service has not been lessened. But spiritual authority is not normal and complete when it lacks the full indorsement of the mind of the Church. The mind of the Protestant Church has been for a generation in a state of inquiry rather than of affirmation at certain vital points of faith. Most immediate in its bearings upon authority has been the inquiry, under the application of the principles of historical criticism, into the doctrine of sacred Scripture. Less immediate in its bearings upon authority, but in some respects more far-reaching, has been the inquiry into the method of the divine working, including miracles, considered in the light of the theory of evolution. And very influential in the way of reaction upon theological opinion

and belief has been the closer study of men under the conditions of modern civilization, and the wider and more intelligent acquaintance with the human race. It is not too much to say that the conception of God, the interpretation of the person and work of Jesus Christ, the motive of missions, have been modified by the more intimate knowledge of humanity.

I have already intimated that the process looking toward the reëstablishment of the spiritual authority of the Church is well under way. As I proceed to consider results more in detail, I shall insist that the process is so far advanced that the Church is now justified in reasserting its spiritual authority. It would indeed be a happy conclusion of the questionings, searchings, discussions, and even controversies of the Church, if the generation which has heard all these should yet hear the voice of the Church in some compelling reaffirmation of its faith.

This is not necessary. If need be, more than one generation can afford to spend and be spent in that search after truth which can alone give reality to religion. My insistence, however, is that the intellectual struggle through which the Church of this generation has been passing is fast nearing its natural and legitimate conclusion in the reassertion of spiritual authority. There can be no severer spiritual discipline than that involved in the search after truth. There can be no greater relief to the believing mind than that which comes from discarding errors, however essential these may have seemed to be to faith. There can be no consciousness of spiritual power possible to the Church more real or inspiring than that which comes through the testing of its intellectual humility, honesty, and courage. The consciousness of the Church — this is the supreme fact of Protestantism — is the chief source of power in the exer-

cise of spiritual authority. External proofs, which are accessible to all, gain their motive power from those who have actually incorporated them into faith. The sensitiveness of the world to the vitality, or better the freshness of this faith, cannot be overestimated. Whenever the intellectual faith of the Church, for any reason whatever, grows stale, the external evidences of Christianity have little authoritative value among men. Whatever the process may be which reinvigorates the faith of the Church, by that same process the evidences of Christianity are brought nearer to the understanding of men and to their consciences. The authority of Protestantism cannot reach far beyond the assured consciousness of the Church in matters of faith, a consciousness born out of its spiritual experiences, but reinvigorated from time to time as it passes under the tests of the enlightened reason.

This assurance of faith may be, as it

doubtless has been, of the same degree of power in all believing ages, but the point of belief varies like the point of view. Believing men of different generations see "eye to eye," not because they look from the same point, but because looking from their respective points of vantage they discover the like spiritual realities. Looking, for example, toward Christ from the needs and aspirations and achievements of their differing times, they alike see that in him which is "the same yesterday, to-day, yea and forever." It is of the very genius of Protestantism to take advantage of the natural approach of each age to the unchanging truth in Christianity. Believing that God is in his world as well as in his Church, it does not hesitate to use the environment of faith in the interest of faith.

What are the gains to faith from the more recent changes in the apprehension of religious truth, which, as they are appropriated

by the Church, ought to increase the consciousness of its spiritual power, and give a more confident assertion of its spiritual authority?

First of all, Protestantism now has in hand a Bible which it can hold in consistency with its own well-defined principles. A Bible exempted from the tests of historical criticism is not a Protestant Bible. It is inconsistent to the last degree to affirm the right of private judgment in respect to the interpretation of Scripture, and at the same time to deny the right of private judgment in respect to the origin and historical order of the Scriptures. From the Protestant point of view it is as necessary to ask what the Bible is, and how it came to be, as it is to ask what the Bible means. It is as reverent a thing to reinvestigate the authenticity of Scripture in any of its parts as it is to reexamine and revise the text of Scripture. Indeed, if textual criticism is justifiable,

much more in every way is historical criticism.

The argument against the examination into the origin of the Bible, because such an examination tends to create confusion in the minds of believers, has its own answer in the experience of Protestantism regarding the exercise of the right of the individual interpretation of Scripture. What are the many divisions and sub-divisions of Protestantism, which constantly point the moral for the advocates of an infallible Papacy, but the outgrowth of the different interpretations of Scripture, or the over-emphasis, as in the case of the Papacy itself, upon some one text of Scripture? As Protestants we believe that on the whole the liberty of private interpretation has been profitable to religion in spite of the temporary cost to the unity of the Church. The temporary cost, I say, for it is a most significant fact that the historical criticism of the Bible, in break-

ing down the literalism of denominational beliefs, has contributed more than any one cause toward the recent advance in Christian unity. A Bible set free from the last bondage to literalism, no longer the bulwark of divisive ecclesiastical dogmas, but now become the simple and natural vehicle for the supreme revelation of God to men, has already begun its great constructive work in the Church, of which the chief sign is the growing concentration of faith among Christian believers. The first result of this intellectual revival of Christianity has been the apprehension of Christianity in its wholeness. It has brought out the one aim and purpose of the Bible in true proportion. The separating tenets of the sects have been relegated to their proper place. The belief which makes a man a Christian has been magnified above any or all beliefs which make him this or that kind of a Christian. Here lies a most appreciable gain to faith.

The new conception of the Bible is giving a new conception of Christianity, larger, simpler, and more unifying. Incidentally, it is very much to have gained a Bible which can be held in complete harmony with the principles of Protestantism, open at every point to fearless but reverent inquiry; but the essential gain to faith, and therefore to the spiritual authority of the Church, lies in the change of emphasis from the external to the internal authority of the Bible. It is the spirit of the Bible reaching complete expression in the person, teachings, work, and sacrifice of Christ, that is becoming the rule of Christian faith and practice, displacing the rule of that literalism, which, by giving equal authority to all parts of Scripture, neutralized in so large degree the authority of Scripture as a whole. As Dr. George A. Gordon has recently remarked with much significance, "When Jesus comes into history a new perspective of the Bible is needed."

Another gain to faith, contributing perhaps more directly to spiritual authority, is to be seen in the growing realization of Christian unity throughout Protestantism, and even throughout Christendom. For the first time for centuries multitudes of Christians, irrespective of any local designation, really believe and feel that the Church is nothing less, to borrow the inspiring saying of Erasmus, than "the congregation of all men throughout the whole world who agree in the faith of the Gospel." So far as the sense of this universal fellowship obtains, there goes with it the consciousness of spiritual power. The ordinary speech or action of the individual believer, in whom this new consciousness is dominant, rises into the dignity and repose of spiritual authority.

There is an authority, far greater at times, born out of an entirely different experience. The individual, standing, so far as he knows, absolutely alone, conscious only of his iso-

lation in his testimony to some compelling truth, may stand for the highest type of authority. Most of the authoritative movements of the Church have had their origin in these individual and isolated experiences. Gradually the contagion of some steadfast witness to an unrecognized truth has created a witness-bearing body of believers. Many of the protesting Christian communions arose in this way. But when a protesting truth has been acknowledged, and has found acceptance according to its value, the protest has fulfilled its office. It then becomes untimely and therefore ineffective. The spiritual equivalent of the protest can then be found only in a deeper and more vital grasp upon the common faith.

Whatever occasion may arise in the immediate future requiring the protest in the service of truth, it seems to be clear that spiritual authority now lies, not in the isolated and unacknowledged truth calling for

witnesses, but in the fundamental and universal truth of Christianity to be apprehended more seriously and joyfully under the consenting fellowship of "all men throughout the whole world who agree in the faith of the Gospel." The danger of insincerity and formality lies to-day in the narrowness of dissent or in the pride of arrogant assumption. Every distinctive body of Christians may be allowed and expected to remain loyal to its own traditions, but the grand loyalty, to be demanded of all alike, is loyalty to that conception of Christianity which can be realized and exemplified only in a vital Christian unity.

Reference has been made to the effect of the historical criticism of the Bible in breaking down the barriers which have been created and maintained under the rule of literalism. Its effect in this regard cannot be overestimated. But criticism, it is to be remembered, is altogether an intellectual

process. The immediate results are destructive. Sometimes the process seems to be over-destructive. Doubtless the historical criticism of the Bible seemed at first to many to be needlessly destructive, and its results too far negative. The positive side of its work appeared later, as has been intimated, in opening the larger view from the Scriptures and in revealing the essential truth which they set forth in right proportion to its environment. But neither the removal of barriers, nor the enlargement of view caused by the new understanding of the Scriptures, can fully explain the sudden and swift tendencies in all the churches toward unity. The "flowing together" of heretofore separate currents of religious life is the most striking phenomenon in the religious world of to-day. There seems to be no limit to the practical combinations which are being effected between the different denominations. The spirit of coöperation is

becoming the dominant spirit in the conduct of missions at home and abroad — more marked even abroad than at home. Very significant in this respect was the recent World Missionary Conference at Edinburgh, made up of twelve hundred delegates from all the Protestant missionary bodies in the world, speaking and working in perfect harmony in a ten days' session, and concluding with the appointment of a Continuation Committee to carry out so far as practical the suggestions of the Conference, and to prepare at the fitting time for another like gathering. "Perhaps the greatest and most comprehensive impression," said Dr. Arthur H. Smith, the missionary statesman of China, in reviewing the Conference, "was the opening and steadily expanding vision of a possible *reunited Christendom* which many of us have perhaps been unconsciously relegating to the spaces of eternity."

The sermon of Bishop Brent of the Phil-

ippines in Westminster Abbey soon after the meeting at Edinburgh was equally significant as giving a glimpse of the unifying sentiment which is at work in the Anglican Communion. In discussing relative spiritual values from the perspective of missionary service in the Philippines, he made the following contrast: "To one coming as I do from the vast Orient, where great questions compel our whole attention, questions which threaten our very existence, the matter of ritual seems a very subsidiary affair. There are two classes of people in the world, those who gesticulate and those who do not. It is largely a matter of temperament — those who gesticulate are the ritualists, those who do not are the non-ritualists. The subject is unworthy of much attention. Fairness recognizes that the City of God is a city of magnificent distances. Its height and length and breadth are the same — limitless; in it are great extremes, not contradictory, but

complementary. He who lives at one extreme reaches his largest liberty when he can visit the opposite extreme without losing his way. If, however, he goes only with abuse on his lips and missiles in his hand, in God's name let him keep to his own corner of the city. It is not safe for himself or others to walk abroad. The beauty and proportion of the city are spoiled when you narrow its boundaries. It is of the essence of unfairness to read out of the city a fellow citizen because he lives in a distant street with which you are not acquainted."

It may seem too impracticable a matter for notice to refer to the incorporation of the "Christian Unity Foundation," having for its ultimate aim the formal union of all Christians throughout the world — of the Protestant Churches, of the Roman Catholic Church, and of the Greek Church. But who knows how to measure those yearnings and anticipations which so often precede

the change of the impossible into the possible? The plain fact is that there is a growing expectation at the heart of Christendom in regard to the unity of the visible Church. Formal and structural unity may not be desirable. The unity of mutual recognition and of coöperation between all parts of the Church may be the better result. But the end sought for is coming to be more than a sentiment. There is a glowing belief, rising at times to a prophetic sense, that the Church has arrived in the order of truth at the understanding and declaration of the truth of the Kingdom of God. This belief, in so far as it is entertained, is giving to the Church of to-day the consciousness of its place in the historic succession. The full realization of this belief would give the Church a place beside the Church of the Reformation, or of any earlier distinguishing period. For the acceptance of each new truth in the divine

ordering carries with it the exercise of the appropriate Christian virtue. In the order of the great Christian virtues, — faith, hope, and love, — it is the last which awaits an exemplification like that which attended the experience of hope in the early Church, or the experience of faith in the Church of the Reformation.

A still greater gain to faith, in the way of spiritual authority, is to be found in the more intimate relation of Christian thought to the person of Christ. In referring to the present relation of Christian thought to Christ as more intimate, I do not affirm that it is clearer or better defined. In many respects it is distinctly less clear and well defined. The more modern conception of Christ lacks altogether the definiteness of the metaphysical statements in regard to his person. The language in which nearly all modern writers on the person of Christ take refuge is — "The uniqueness of Jesus";

a very indefinite, and for any of the really defining uses of speech a most unsatisfactory term. But in the very indefiniteness of the term, as it has come into common use, one may detect the present effort of faith to detach the thought of Christ from the formal and rigid abstractions of the early creeds, and to make him more accessible to those who would think of him in personal terms, each in his own way and according to his own desires. No one who compares the synoptic gospels with the Pauline epistles can deny the Christian liberty of idealizing the person of Jesus. Inspired though the idealization of Paul may have been, it is none the less the expression of his own personal need, trust, love, and devotion, — in fact, it covers the whole range of his quickened imagination and emotions. The greater Christian souls in succeeding ages have taken the like liberty. Each of the more vital Christian ages has

had in a very real sense its own Christ. Some have tried to put their Christ into their creeds, others into their prayers and hymns. Whatever has seemed most true, most necessary, most to be believed in, or to be hoped for, in God, most to be longed after and striven for by man, has been, according to the varying spiritual standards of the time, set forth in the vision of Christ. The vision may at times have been distorted, but it has always reflected the best there was at every time in the struggles and hopes of humanity.

According to this liberty of idealization as applied to the person of Christ, much of the present thought about him is employed in the transfiguration of his humanity. To many, standing in this transfigured presence, the lines between the human and the divine soften and fade away. The perfect humanity of Jesus becomes the complete expression of his divinity. To such minds also the

humanity of Jesus becomes the assurance and the guarantee of the divine in man. Then we, too, are the sons of God.

In interpreting this conception of Christ it is not necessary to accept its limitations, or to adopt the logic of its conclusion. Back of every really Christian conception of Christ there are always vast reserves of faith. The faith of our age draws, far more than it is conscious to itself of drawing, upon the faith of all the ages. I have listened to sermons on the human Christ couched in the language of reverent homage or of passionate adoration, as if inspired by the theology of the Nicene Creed, or by the mysticism of the mediæval church. Logically the premise did not seem to carry so high a conclusion. When Harnack says, as reported by Professor Evans in the "Congregationalist" of September 3, 1910, "If we hold fast unconditionally that Jesus was a man, it remains true that God has made this

Jesus Lord and Christ for mankind, and that faith in him has created and still creates sons of God," there are many Christians who would prefer to read the title to their sonship in a closer relation to God. An earlier statement of Richard H. Hutton, then editor of "The Spectator," is in this regard more assuring. "We are told by it (the Incarnation) something of God's absolute and essential nature, something which does not merely describe what he is to us, but what He is in Himself. If Christ is the eternal son of God, God is indeed and in essence a Father; the social nature, the spring of love, is of the very essence of the eternal being; the communication of his life, the reciprocation of his affection dates from beyond time, belongs, in other words, to the very being of God." . . . [This truth] "is first proclaimed to us to save us from sin, strengthen us in frailty, and lift us above ourselves; but it could not do this as it does,

did we not know that God was, and his love was, and his fatherly life was, apart from man, and that it is a reality infinitely deeper and vaster than the existence of his human children."[1] We are, that is, sons of God, not because of a relation of fatherhood established in our behalf, but because the relation always existed in Him, to be made known to us by Jesus Christ, by whom also it was to be made available for us, even in our sin.

But who may question the logic of devotion, or measure its carrying power into the regions of faith? The faith in Christ which is born out of present conditions is not largely metaphysical, much less controversial, but rather interpretative, and all the more real because unconsciously interpretative of the feeling of humanity toward him. It is the spontaneous tribute of that humanity which

[1] Richard Holt Hutton, *The Incarnation and Principles of Evidence*, pp. 29, 37. Pott & Amery. (1871.)

has been created in and through him during the Christian centuries. If humanity finds itself nearer to God, so that the deepest sense of the human reaches more and more into the consciousness of a divine capacity, it is Christ who is recognized as the inspirer of this far-reaching consciousness. Hence the ardor and glow of the new faith, and above all its contagious loyalty. Its authority lies not in definitions of the nature of Christ, nor in logical deductions from the Scriptures concerning his person, but in the interpretation of the feelings of men toward him, their desire to honor him, to obey him as master, to follow him as leader, to fight his battles with unrighteousness and sin, to take part in the establishment of his kingdom on the earth.

If there is a growing insistence upon the humanity of Christ in the practical faith of the Church, it is because men find themselves drawing near to him under the ur-

gent incentives of human needs, both personal and social, and because their ideals of service have no satisfying realization short of his sacrifice. And if in like manner insistence is placed upon the humanity of Christ in any attempt to define his nature, to reconstruct the doctrine of his person, it is because men think they see in him the perfect oneness of the human and the divine. In no sense is the conception of Christ most characteristic of modern thought or faith, a revival, either by intention or in spirit, of any merely humanistic theories of his person which have had their day in past theological controversies. That view of him rather has been fixed upon which seems to reveal him in his nearness to men, which invites intimacy in the diviner forms of service, and which best accords with the Christian optimism of humanity concerning its own future on the earth. Whatever may prove to be the shortcomings of this con-

ception of Christ, these are not to be found in the spirit and purpose which animate those who hold it. Its spiritual authority lies in the sincerity in which it is held, and in the increasing response which it awakens among all who have at heart the saving of their fellow men.

A bold exception to the otherwise universal feeling throughout Christendom toward Christ must be noted in the rising cult dominated by the philosophy of Nietzsche and his disciples. Its attack upon Christianity is original, in that it is an attack upon humanity as interpreted by modern democracy. Christianity is a "curse" because it takes sides with the underpart of humanity. That were better eliminated. Sympathy, charity, pity are obstructive virtues in the progress of the race. The average man delays the coming of the superman, the survivor in the struggle for existence, the goal of mankind. The Christ of humanity is the

chief hindrance to progress, because he haunts the world with the idea of saving men, and so burdens the race with the multitude who, for the final result, were better unsaved. This is an absolutely fair attack upon Christianity and logical to the last degree. It reaches to the heart of the whole issue in which the future of Christianity is involved, passing by all questions about the authenticity of its sources, all questions of Christian theology, all questions about the person of Christ. It aims at the spirit of Christianity. Its contention is with those who believe that this spirit was embodied in Jesus of Nazareth, and who in his name do their saving work in humanity. The various tenets of the Christian faith are not matters of interest.

It is refreshing to have the issues concerning Christianity thus set forth and defined. Here *is* the real issue. The defiance of this philosophy, its very blasphemies (in

the ears of Christian believers) can be pardoned to its clearness, directness, and courage. It is so definite and practical that it can be understood by workingmen at their tasks as easily as by the "intellectuals." Indeed, it is the basis of a recent discussion between two writers on the staff of two popular newspapers — the one a socialist, the other an individualist. The philosophy of Nietzsche in interpreting itself gives the best possible interpretation of present-day Christianity. It sweeps the ground of minor issues, and makes perfectly clear what it now means to be "with" Christ or "against" him.

A further gain to faith, not directly as a source of authority, but of more value as vitalizing the religious atmosphere, is the new sense of the reality of a spiritual world. The reaction from materialism has been positive as well as negative. The lesser reaction is seen in disappointment,

dissatisfaction, and disgust with its moral results. The greater reaction is beginning to be seen in a revaluation of the things of the spirit. Another psychology on deeper foundations and with vastly broader range is in the process of development. It is not too much to say that the study of mental and spiritual phenomena divides the field of academic interest and research with the study of physical phenomena. Physical science itself can no longer be quoted, if indeed it has ever been rightly quoted, in support of a purely materialistic conception of the universe. The authority of the senses has been strictly delimited to the field within which the senses can act. This limitation of the range of the senses was brought out very vividly in the simile introduced by Sir Oliver Lodge in his address before the British Association at its recent meeting at Sheffield. Materialist man was his simile; indeed, all men in a greater or less degree

might be compared to a dog in a picture gallery. The dog lacked the power to see the more important of the truths presented to his eyes. He could investigate but not appreciate what was before him. "It was through our senses," said the speaker, "that we became aware of the universe. But they also limited us and determined the kind of information that we received. We often forgot that. We thought we saw the universe in the only possible way it could be known. If we had other senses the universe would look quite different. Our senses happened to tell us about matter. Imagine beings whose senses told them about ether, and ignored matter. Their point of view would be quite different, and their statements inconsistent with ours. Yet both would be true as far as they went."

Here is a pretty wide and clear opening for the faith of the mystics. Keble does not venture far within when he sings

(with the change of but a word in his lines),—

> Two worlds are ours : 't is only (sense)
> Forbids us to descry
> The mystic heaven and earth within
> Plain as the sea and sky.

Much of the best philosophic thought in the interpretation of spiritual phenomena is becoming positive and far reaching. "The world interpreted religiously," says William James, "is not the materialistic world over again, with an altered expression: it must have over and above the altered expression a natural constitution different at some point from that which a materialistic world would have. It must be such that different events can be expected in it, different conduct must be required. . . . The whole drift of my education goes to persuade me that the world of our present consciousness is only one out of many worlds of consciousness that exist, and that those

other worlds must contain experiences which have a meaning for our life also: and that although in the main their experiences and those of this world keep discrete, yet the two become contiguous at certain points, and higher energies filter in. By being faithful in my poor measure to this one belief, I seem to myself to keep more sane and true. I *can* of course put myself into the sectarian scientist's attitude, and imagine vividly that the world of sensations and of scientific laws and objects may be all. But whenever I do this, I hear that inward monitor of which W. K. Clifford once wrote, whispering the word 'bosh'! Assuredly the real world is of a different temperament — more intricately built than physical science allows." [1]

"The world interpreted religiously . . . must be such that different events can be

[1] William James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, pp. 578–579.

expected in it, different conduct required." In this pregnant sentence lies the germ of a rational belief in miracles. The religious interpretation of the world does not mean a blind resort to a vague supernaturalism. Who can measure the elasticity of nature? Who will dare deny room for the natural operation of forces which elude the ordinary watch of the senses? Who will dare deny the natural operation of hidden forces which may at times come out into the open and declare themselves to the senses? Doubtless the miracle would be of little advantage to-day to faith. In the judgment of Jesus its evidential value, even in his time, was of secondary account. The proof of himself was in himself. "Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father in me — or else believe me for the very works' sake." But he did not hesitate to put forth "mighty works" when that kind of working seemed the more intensely natural to the men of his

time, and therefore more convincing. Because "our senses happen to tell us about matter" more acutely than has ever been the case in the experience of man, shall we make their specialized use in this direction the test of any past or future action to which they may have been or may yet be trained? Are we commissioned because of our expert knowledge of matter to standardize the relation of the material to the spiritual world? Will the ages of greater spiritual enlightenment which are yet to come acknowledge this age of the highest known material development as the age of spiritual authority? In other words, is this the age to settle once for all the question of miracles?

These questions are pertinent to our discussion, and yet in asking them I am conscious that they do not fairly represent the underlying and emerging spirit of our time. That I believe to be rising toward the religious interpretation of the world. It is

wonderful how quickly and how efficiently the spirit in man asserts itself against any and all materialistic interpretations of the universe. Man has never allowed any usurpation of his place in the order of the world. Whether after the manner of the East he withdraws himself from matter, when it would overcome him, holding himself superior and apart, or after the manner of the West, upon every accession of material force he straightway proceeds to subjugate and control, it is still the same spirit asserting itself in superiority or in mastery.

There is, however, another manifestation of the spirit in man in its attitude toward the material world, quite different from the contempt of the East or the utilitarianism of the West, namely, its ability to make itself at home in an enlarging physical universe. Something of this appeared when modern astronomy revealed a new relation of man to the universe of space, but for that

revelation the mind of man had been reasonably prepared. Day after day, and night after night, he had been apprised of other worlds. The theory of evolution set forth a new relation of man to the universe of time. This revelation came as a surprise to all, and as a shock to many. The average mind had not been prepared for this story of ages upon ages in the making of the earth, and in the development of life upon its surface, much less for the tremendous conclusions drawn from it affecting man himself. The opening of an illimitable past in the life of the earth was a far more appreciable and bewildering extension of man's environment than any previous enlargement of the physical universe had been. It seemed to let the human mind into the inmost secrets of the working of the Almighty. Nothing in the vastness of the creative plan ever produced so great a moral effect as the new knowledge of the minuteness, the orderliness, the infinite pa-

tience involved in the method of procedure in the development of life on the earth. Religious thought passed through the successive stages of confusion, antagonism, and reflection into a serious investigation of the actual phenomena of life, especially of the relation of the spiritual in man to the physical; with the final result, already intimated, of the assertion of man's spiritual supremacy. The religious mind has become naturalized in this larger world of time, and finds itself more at home in it than it could ever have hoped to be in the universe of space; for that could only proclaim the power and glory of a transcendent God, while this reveals the nearness, the patience, the forethought of the immanent God.

In setting forth the gains to Christian faith from the present intellectual revival in Christianity, there has been no intimation that these gains are to be understood as reconstituting Christianity. Christianity has

never been made over by any generation, not even by that which gave us the Reformation. The unchanging truth at the heart of it is always vastly more essential and significant than any of those changes in the apprehension of it which come through the necessary readjustment of the intellectual faith of the Church to the more enlightened reason. Nothing is more to be deprecated than such a term as the "New Religion," when reference is thereby meant to some special development or application of Christianity. Christianity came into the world once for all, a new but abiding spiritual power, making itself known through its revelation of God and its interpretation of humanity, and making itself felt through its sacrificial attitude toward the human race. The spirit of Christianity is not an improvable quality judged by any known ethical or spiritual standards. The Church has not yet realized, in faith or in practice, the meaning

of its revelation of God, or of its interpretation of man. We have learned by experiences, both bitter and joyful, through our denial of it and through our acceptance of it, that there is but one way to the heart of the world, — the way of the cross.

Neither is it to be inferred from the insistence which has been placed upon the results of the intellectual revival in Christianity that these results will have a sufficient outcome and expression in some Christian Apologetic. Such an outcome, if at all comparable with some of the Apologies of other times, would indeed be welcome, but it is not necessary and would not in itself be sufficient. The larger and sufficient outcome must appear in spiritual authority; and spiritual authority makes its appeal, not only to the reason, but to the whole man. Reason always has the right to block the way of authority when authority becomes unreasonable. It would be a sad anomaly if truth

could prevail against reason; prevail, that is, against one of its chosen instruments. On the other hand, spiritual truth can never make headway through the reason alone. Reason rightly demands satisfaction, and satisfaction includes quickening and inspiration. When this high end has been accomplished, religion is prepared to assert its authority over the conscience and the emotions, — the two constants in the moral objective of Christianity. When once Christianity has been set free (this is the not infrequent intellectual task of faith) from the bondage of literalism, from the narrowness of the divisions and sub-divisions of the Church, from the unrealities of a merely traditional belief, and above all, from the benumbing influence of materialism in any of its subtle forms; and when once the Church has been brought back (this also is the intellectual task of faith) to the clear apprehension of the unchangeable spirit of Christianity, of its abid-

ing truth, and of its unalterable method — then the ministry of spiritual authority has free exercise among men. If the intellectual faith of the Church, or better, its apprehension of Christianity, is clear, convincing, satisfying, stimulating to the Church itself and really Christianizing, there is little need of reasoning with the world. The world is ready at any time for the application of real Christianity. The getting ready, so far as this is an intellectual process, belongs to the Church in its own behalf, far more than in respect to the world.

The authority of the Church has, of course, its direct and immediate objective in the conscience. Nothing vital is reached until that is reached. Authority is not established until it is established in the moral sense. Due account must be taken of the fact that the moral sense of men, both in individuals and in communities, is constantly under appeal from other sources than the Church,

and quite apart from the incentives or sanctions of religion. There are times, for example, when the press is as strenuous in its moral appeals as the pulpit, but with this difference. The press is for the most part impersonal, the pulpit is altogether personal. Personality plays an important part in moral appeal, not so much because of the voice, and eye, and presence of the speaker, as because of the opportunity to identify and verify the appeal. Who makes the appeal, and in whose interest? What are the motives? A journal of thoroughly established consistency, even if the management is not known personally, may have great moral influence; but if there is a suspicion regarding any journal that it is insincere, or "interested," in its advocacy of a moral cause, its influence is next to naught. It is not simply the question of what is said, but of who says it. The press is fast coming under the rule which Aristotle laid down for the orator, —

"Your influence over your hearers will depend upon what your hearers think of you."

The far greater difference, however, between the moral appeal from the Church and any like appeal from other sources lies in the fact that the moral objective itself is really different. It is one thing to arouse public sentiment; it is quite another thing to awaken the personal sense of sin, or even the personal sense of duty. To individualize, if need be to isolate the conscience, to bring the soul into the presence of God, to make men feel, each for himself, as William James says for us all, that "we and God have business with each other," is the moral prerogative of religion. It is only from within the Church that a Tertullian can say, "Soul, stand thou forth in the midst. I summon thee, not such as when found in the schools, trained in the libraries, nurtured in the academies and

porches of Athens. I address thee as simple, such as they have who have nothing but thee, the very and entire thing that thou art in the cross-roads, in the public squares, in the shops of the artisans. I demand of thee those truths which thou hast of thyself carried with thee into man, which thou hast learned to know either from thyself or from the author of thy being." [1]

It is a fair and necessary question to ask whether we have not reached the limit in our advance toward public righteousness, without the support of a corresponding advance in personal religion. Why so frequent relapses in moral reform? Why does the evil suppressed at one point find vent so easily at another? Why do "we the people" study so carefully the evasion of the laws which we enact, or neutralize their spirit in the keeping of them? Why does the conscience of the city or of the nation apparently de-

[1] Works of Tertullian, *De Testimonio Animae*, chapter i.

cline in sensitiveness and might with the increase of numbers? These are questions which have no answer short of a moral reckoning with ourselves as individuals, as moral units in the community, or corporation, or state. It is doubtful if the Church ever had a more open or acknowledged opportunity for the assertion of moral authority, or for a more direct advance toward its moral objective in the consciences of men. If the Church can once again teach men how to repent, the nation will evidently enough reap the fruits of their repentance. Public corruption will visibly diminish, as men, semi-righteous men, withdraw from it the support of their personal coöperation or indifference. Who doubts for a moment that if the membership of the Church of Christ in this country were seriously and sensitively honest, our cities and the nation itself would be at least safe from corruption? All honor to the men who are fight-

ing the battles of righteousness from within or from without the Church. But after all, so far as the Church is concerned, is it the Church militant which can do the present business quite so thoroughly as the Church uncorruptible, undefiled, "unspotted from the world"?

Concerning the other constant, to which I have referred as the moral objective of the Church in the exercise of its spiritual authority, namely, the emotions, we cannot remind ourselves too often or too urgently that the truths of Christianity were designed to be felt. Christianity is written in the language of the great emotions. It is the story of the forgiveness, compassion, patience, and sacrificial love of God finding response in the gratitude, devotion, trust, and sacrificial love of the human heart. The generations which have not been profoundly moved by the distinctive Christian truths have not been profoundly Christian.

The greatest danger to Christianity, especially in times of intellectual awakening, is that it may become what Dr. Jowett calls a "dry religion." As against such a danger the risks from the more emotional faiths are hardly worthy of mention. The almost inevitable tendency of a religion untouched by emotion is toward complacency, — complacency in respect to the conventional virtues, or in respect to good deeds of different sorts, or in respect to superiority in matters of belief. It is hard to reach a true and abiding humility except through the deeper experiences of the soul.

The evangelical note is never absent from the real message of Christianity. Christianity always wants to be a gospel. It seeks to "find" every man in his need. Very few sail over the many depths of life without going down into some of them — the depth of loneliness, of temptation, of disappointment, of moral weakness, of the sense of

sin. These escaped, there remains to every man the inevitable catastrophe. From the first struggle of the soul with things which are to be resisted to the final surrender to the inevitable, man needs God, and he may at any moment be apprised of the fact. Christianity is not simply a religion for moral and spiritual emergencies; but if it were not that, always that, and known to be such, it would be too scant and weak a religion for the human race.

The contagious element in religion lies in the emotions. When religion is not contagious it is not thoroughly at work. In the spiritual world the terms of the physical life may be reversed. Contagion is the sign of health. Religion is in a normal stage in any community when it is in the contagious stage. Its vitality is greatest when it overleaps all obstructions, and spreads its "saving health" among the nations. The supreme test of the vitality of the Church, the

supreme measure of its spiritual authority, is found in its missionary attitude. In its deepest and broadest sense the missionary attitude is an emotional attitude. Every man knows the meaning of the love *of* the world. That he knows is a matter of the heart. Love *for* the world has no meaning that is not in like manner, and to a like degree, a matter of the heart. In the exercise of its spiritual authority, the projective and carrying power of the Church lies largely in the depth and breadth of its emotional faith. So Christianity began to spread, and so it has continued to spread. The faith of Paul has been the missionary faith of the Church, and his faith was "logic on fire."

II

THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN SYMPATHY

THE ministry of spiritual authority is based upon the apprehension of truth. The ministry of human sympathy is based upon the fellow-feeling with men. Modern society presents certain alienating conditions under which this ministry of the Church must be exercised. These are of various kinds, as will appear incidentally in the course of the discussion. The most serious alienating condition, however, is one which the Church itself has created. The Church of a great democracy has not kept pace with the growth of the democratic spirit. Naturally this condition, because the Church has created it, calls for the especial attention of the Church. It makes it the matter of first concern in the interest of religion that the

Church shall recover that contact with the life about it, which it has lost to its own hurt and to the hurt of religion.

The Christian term for contact is sympathy. Sympathy is not pity and it is more than charity. It is the most concrete and sensitive expression of both love and justice. The kind of consideration which it demands of one man in behalf of another is expressed in the personal word, — "Put yourself in his place." It is by far the most difficult of attainment of all the outgoing Christian virtues. Pity is almost spontaneous, and charity in some form and within limits is easily cultivated. But sympathy becomes a hard and reluctant virtue, as any one can discover for himself, when human demands rise above pity or charity. It is easy to feel for, and to act for the man who is down : it is hard to feel with the man who is coming up, especially if he has nearly reached one's own level. Democracy assumes the con-

stant and willing exercise of sympathy, sympathy for the rising man or the rising class. The poor, the weak, the unaspiring are not necessarily any better off under a democracy than under any other civilized form of society or government. Pity and charity can do their work, leaving the ordinary social classifications undisturbed. But when the ambition to rise begins to take effect, and social discontent becomes widespread, and organized efforts are made to advance, then the demand is for sympathy. If this demand is not met promptly and willingly, the result is alienation, and the creation of a class or classes from below rather than from above.

The present social fact of most religious significance is the rise of the workingman and his alienation from the Church. Indeed, the rise of the workingman, the organization of workingmen into a class, and the solidarity of the upward movement, con-

stitute the most important social, and perhaps political phenomenon of the present day. We are now concerned with the movement religiously, for it has become to some a religion, and to many a substitute for religion. All workingmen are by no means socialists. Trade unionism, as originally devised and as now generally interpreted, is anti-socialistic in its economic principles. But most workingmen are in sympathy with socialism in its social, and ethical, and semi-religious aims. In so far as socialism offers itself as a substitute for the religion of the Church, it has their sympathy if not their adherence. In so far therefore as socialism, in offering itself to workingmen as a substitute for the religion of the Church, wins their sympathy, it ought to receive the careful attention and study of the Church. Far too little thought of any discriminating kind is given by the Church to the religious aspects of socialism, as may be seen by noting two

very common fallacies in the general reasoning on this subject.

One fallacy lurks in such reasoning as this: socialism is an economic system; as such it is impracticable; therefore it can have no large influence religiously.

Socialism is an economic system. It means a definite and complete replacement of any and all existing economic systems. It stands for the substitution of public for private ownership in the means of production. The economic definition of socialism which has received unquestioned acceptance is as follows: "To replace the system of private capital by a system of collective capital, that is, by a method of production which would introduce a unified organization of national labor on the basis of collective or common ownership of the means of production by all the members of society. This collective method of production would remove the present competitive system, by

placing under official administration such departments of production as can be managed collectively, as well as the distribution among all of the common produce of all, according to the amount and social utility of the productive labor of each."[1] The Socialist Party National Platform (Chicago, May, 1908) declares—"The private ownership of the land and means of production used for exploitation is the rock upon which class rule is built: political government is its indispensable instrument. The wage-workers cannot be freed from exploitation without conquering the political power and substituting collective for private ownership of the land and means of production used for exploitation."[2]

Government control over certain public utilities, or government ownership of them,

[1] Dr. A. Schäffle, *The Quintessence of Socialism*, pp. 3, 4, 3d English and 8th German editions.

[2] Cited in *Twentieth Century Socialism*, Edmund Kelly, p. 416 (Appendix).

so far as it has been attempted, stops far short of socialism. The control or ownership, for example, of the means of transportation is a very different thing from the direction or ownership of all the means of productive industry. The productive industries are organized under the initiative, control, and ownership of private capital. Socialism means the reversal of the present process.

The ethical reason for socialism is given in the following statement of the theory: "Summarily we may describe it as the doctrine that, whereas the means of production (capital, with land and raw material) are as indispensable to every man's existence as his own body, society should secure for all its members an equally free access to them, by disallowing private property in them. Private property, as it exists, exists solely in virtue of social action, and the motive for that action is social utility. Its aim is to secure for the producer the

means of production, so that he who will work may work out his own salvation. Socialists believe this aim to be unrealized, owing to the tendency of capital to concentration. This tendency divides society into two classes, — a diminishing class who have capital and can work on their own account, and an increasing class who have not, but must sell their services; capitalists and "proletarians."[1]

The economic argument for socialism (collectivism) is based upon the tendency of the present competitive system to overproduction. Production stimulated by competition, multiplied indefinitely by machinery and by the exploitation of labor, creates a surplus of goods constantly demanding new markets, a demand which can be met only by commercial expansion; which means commercial wars, the support of great navies,

[1] R. C. K. Ensor, *Modern Socialism as set forth by Socialists*, 2d edition, pp. xxvii, xxviii.

and increased taxation — all of which results in the enrichment of the few at the expense of labor. The remedy for over-production is the regulation of the product according to the wants of those who produce it, the assignment of work to each producer, and the distribution of the product in ratio to the determined value of the work rendered.

The practicability of the socialistic scheme is utterly denied by the average business man, as by most students of economics. Many of the evils complained of under the present system are admitted, but the remedy proposed by collectivism is rejected, on the ground that the abolition of free competition would take away the chief initiative from business, reducing in time the quality of the product, flattening production to the level of unstimulated wants; on the ground that assigned labor would become enforced labor, introducing a new and arbitrary type of bondage; and on the

further ground that the scheme would break down in administration, owing to the impossibility of providing through the State a sufficient number of competent administrators free from the taint of personal ambition.

To the ordinary business mind the apparent impracticability of collectivism settles the whole question. But not so to the mind of the socialist. At the point of assumed impracticability he takes up the argument and urges it with the ardor of religious faith. The characteristic of religious faith is that it is not daunted by the seemingly impracticable. It looks forward to new conditions which it expects to create, under which the impracticable, if right, will become practicable. So the socialist strengthens the argument in his own mind, if that be necessary, by the infusion of faith. To understand socialism one must go beyond the argument for it to the faith of the socialist. "The typical socialist of

Germany, France, England, and America, the man or woman who gives his or her energies to educating and organizing and disciplining the wonderful world-wide army, ever growing, ever marching forward, undismayed by defeat, sure of ultimate victory, already thirty millions strong — the largest army under a single banner the world has ever seen — this typical workaday, militant socialist does not look upon himself or herself as a patent medicine vender, but as a John the Baptist proclaiming with no uncertain sound the advent of a New Order. Such an army inspired by a common faith, even though the faith be a delusion, animated by a common purpose, even though the purpose be incapable of realization, is a force that you as a practical man must reckon with."[1] Such an as-

[1] *Men vs. the Man:* a Correspondence between Robert Rives La Monte, Socialist, and H. L. Mencken, Individualist, p. 3. Henry Holt & Co.

sertion of the socialistic faith shows the fallacy of dismissing socialism as a negligible quantity in its semi-religious influence, because of its impracticability as an economic system.

Another and somewhat like fallacy lies in the very common way of reasoning about socialism to this effect: The insistence of socialism is upon the possession of material goods; but the possession of material goods is not the aim of religion; therefore socialism is not worthy of consideration in its religious aspects. The reply of the socialist to this reasoning is very definite and concrete. It is the *argumentum ad hominem.* Material good may not be the professed aim of religion, nor its possession the chief object of religious endeavor, but it is the dominating incident in the religious life of to-day. The accumulated wealth of the country is largely in the hands of the membership of the Church. If this vast

possession of material good has no value comparable with the spiritual possessions of the Church, let the Church make this fact clear by the subordination of the material to the spiritual, — by renunciation, self-denial, and sacrifice. If the possession of material good is fitly incidental to the religious life, and if the struggle for its possession is worthy of the strenuous effort of religious men, then let the Church strive to learn how to share it. If the insistence of socialism upon material good is wrong, the reply continues, the Church ought to rebuke this insistence by its practical indifference to material good. To the degree in which the Church allows the struggle for wealth the contention of socialism is justified, that material good is something to be sought and shared.

In this reply of the socialist, though it be of the personal sort, one can see the fallacy of overlooking the practical behavior

of religious men in dealing with the very things upon which other men have equally set their hearts, and, as they believe, for less selfish purposes. When a socialist says that he is willing to share his goods, or that he is willing to submit himself, for the benefit of others, to a system which will oblige him to share his goods, he has, if he can be taken at his word, the equivalent of a religious motive, if indeed it be not actually a religious motive. It is evident that the way to neutralize the teachings of socialism is not so much by showing its economic impracticability, as by showing the moral practicability of the present economic system. Something is wrong, and therefore unsettled, in a system which does not work well morally, in this instance, with due regard to human interests. The Church cannot be satisfied with the gross statistics of national prosperity. Its concern is as much with the distribution of wealth as with the

making of it, lest the methods of making it may harbor various sorts of latent injustice. I doubt if the Church can hope to make much headway in its practical interpretation of Christianity among those with whom socialism has become a new form of enthusiasm for humanity, except through a more sane but equally sincere concern for human interests.

I have already said that socialism in its economic teachings is not representative of labor. Socialism is a challenge to the present economic system. Trade unionism is a compromise with it. "The average wage-earner," says John Mitchell, "has made up his mind that he must remain a wage-earner. He has given up the hope of a kingdom to come when he himself will be a capitalist, and he asks that the reward for his work be given to him as a workingman. Singly, he has been too weak to enforce his just demands, and he has sought strength in

union, and has associated himself into labor organizations. . . . There is no necessary hostility between labor and capital. Neither can do without the other: each has evolved from the other. Capital is labor saved and materialized: the power to labor is in itself a form of capital. There is not even a necessary, fundamental antagonism between the laborer and the capitalist." [1]

Beyond the ranks of the socialists and the trade unionists lies the vast unclassified army of workingmen, ranging from the most unskilled laborer to the workman who is in a small way a private capitalist. Probably the majority of this vast body of laborers are not in the habit of thinking much about the economic aspects of their work. The one characteristic (the only one with which we are now concerned) common to laborers throughout the country, whether representing organized or unorganized labor,

[1] John Mitchell, *Organized Labor*, Preface.

is a certain indifference to the Church, or alienation from it. There are doubtless a good many exaggerated statements current on this subject, which can be refuted by reference to exceptional communities or churches, but it is no exaggeration to say that the Church has lost its hold upon the workingman of the country, and that this loss of influence dates from the rise of the workingman through his own efforts, especially through organization. To the degree in which the workingman has been made conscious of himself, made conscious, that is, of his relative position in society, he has separated himself from the Church. Turn which way we will, this alienation of labor from the Church is the background in the religious prospect.

In considering the cause or causes for this state of affairs, the Church ought to be very careful lest it shall aggravate the matter by offering excuses. There really is

no sufficient excuse for this loss of influence. Showing how it may have happened, or actually did happen, is not showing why it should have happened. The plain fact is that at some time the Church began to lose its influence by neglecting a very essential part of its business, and that since that time it has not been sufficiently earnest in doing this essential part of its business to regain its influence. Of course, it requires far more earnestness to regain influence than it would have required to continue to deserve it. The Church lost contact with the workingman by failing to understand him, much more to estimate him, by failing to sympathize with his ambition and purpose to rise, and by failing to do what it might have done to make a sufficient place for him in the social order. The Church of a democracy failed in its application of the democratic spirit at the critical time and in the critical place. The early insensitiveness of the

Church to the condition and aims of the workingman, the lack of sympathy — the fellow-feeling — with him, gradually led to a state of feeling on his part varying from indifference to alienation. The situation is now very complicated. Of that there is no question. The practical question is, Has it gotten out of the hands of the Church? Is it too late to recover it with a view to the best results to all concerned?

I believe that the answer to this question lies almost entirely with the laymen of the Church, with Christian business men. The Church, acting through its authorized agencies, may put itself on record in regard to matters of common social concern, and by conference and coöperation with labor organizations may accomplish much in bringing about needed reforms. Individual leaders of the Church, whose course has been consistently wise and courageous, may become more and more influential in

their relations with the leaders of labor and with the masses. Here and there a minister rightly placed in a labor community, and properly equipped for his task, may change local sentiment by effecting changes in adverse local conditions. But any large and effective movement, looking toward the recovery of the workingman to the Church, must come through those who are in close and responsible relations to him, and ought to originate with them. Of course this implies the personal element, but it does not mean that individual action, however sympathetic it may be, is sufficient. The situation has long since passed by the stage of paternalism. Business men belong to a system under which no man can act effectively alone. In other words, the time has come when those who would seek to recover the alienated classes within the ranks of industry must give as much attention to the working of the present general eco-

nomic system, as to the details of their respective kinds of business. The technical part of this broader work must be intrusted to experts; but back of all delegated service there is always the opportunity and the demand for a supporting public sentiment in the business world, for organized opinion, at times for collective action.

It is not altogether a bad sign that many laymen of the Church are growing restive under the prominence given by the pulpit to subjects of social concern. "I go to church," said a distinguished layman, as recently reported in the daily press, "every Sunday of the year. I go in the expectation of hearing a sermon based on the principles that underlie our faith. I do not go to hear about political economy or to be instructed in political principles. I go to have my best feelings improved, and to come away with all that is best in me quickened, so that I may be a better citizen in every respect. I therefore

recommend to the churches that when they preach to their people, they remember that the people want religion and lots of it, and not political economy."

In criticism of this kind there is the plain intimation that the pulpit takes advantage of its position to invade the territory which belongs to business men. "Political Economy," the layman virtually says, "is not your business, it is mine." Without waiving any of his rights, or without replying merely in the way of retort, why should not the preacher take the layman at his word, uttered or implied, and force upon him the natural, and, as things are to-day, the highly significant conclusion, "Make political economy, with all of its present human complications, your business as a Christian business man. It is to-day the chief part of the business of Christian business men, business of a vastly higher order than the making of money. In the division of duties which you

suggest, here is your duty and your responsibility. You belong to the Church as much as the minister, and you represent it more widely and more sensitively than he can possibly represent it. Accept your share of the great Christian obligation, now so clearly defined and so honorable, and fulfill its responsibilities in the name of Christ and his Church."

I doubt if many of the laymen of the Church have fully considered the fact that the existing economic conditions are a challenge to their intelligence. Money-making may be or may not be an intellectual process, at least there are different degrees of intellectual ability exemplified in the act. Formerly, in fact until very recently, the highest intellectual test was the ability to utilize unused material forces, or to promote new and vast enterprises. The incoming test of intellectual ability in business is bringing in a very well-recognized and imperative moral

factor. The change is seen in the different use of the term "exploitation." Gradually the term has come to stand for selfish, often for ruthless methods. To exploit now means more frequently than otherwise "to bring out anything for one's own advantage without regard to rights or right." The intellectual test now puts the emphasis more and more upon the ability to accomplish great ends with due "regard to rights and right." The game of the street is no longer money-making, however large may be the result. That is not the whole game. The whole game includes "right and *rights*"—honesty and *humanity*. If the Church is to recover its lost relation to the workingman, it must insist that the laymen of the Church who are in business shall learn to play the whole game.

This learning to play the whole game—to include in it the new conception of "right and rights" in the transactions of business,

in the accumulation of wealth, in the promotion of great enterprises — is not the task of a day. A great deal which has come in through tradition and through practice must be unlearned. The new conception of "right" denies the theory that the end justifies the means, the waning theory of success; denies the theory that what is gained by evasion of law, or by legalizing a wrong, can be morally right; denies the theory that charity can cover the sins of business. And the new conception of "rights" requires a sincere and controlling regard for all the human relations and interests concerned in it. It absolutely denies the implication of the old maxim that "business is business," affirming that business is business only when it takes account of all the human factors involved. Without doubt this conception of business makes business more difficult, but it is just this conception of it which will make it more and more

honorable, which *is* making it more and more honorable. The making of money has ceased to be very much of a distinction. The ease with which one may become a millionaire, the greater ease with which once a millionaire he may become a multi-millionaire, does not conduce to the sort of distinction which men most crave. That is always associated in some way with the humanities. There lay, and still lies, the honor of the professions. These are all based upon human relations, the relation of man to man through justice, through mercy, through truth. The rating of a man professionally in the public esteem is determined by the evidence of his loyalty to the principles of his profession, and by his ability to make it of the largest service to humanity. No sane man can deny the material benefits which accrue from nearly all the transactions which pass under the name of business. No one well informed can be un-

mindful of the benefactions to society associated with the names of business men. No one can overlook the moral support to society in the examples of integrity, conspicuous and inconspicuous, which characterize the vast trust-bearing service of the business world. But if business is to become a profession, as I believe it will become, it must be by making the human interests involved in it the first concern. The lack in this regard, the lack, in the final analysis, of human sympathy, has the most direct and appreciable effect in the alienation of the workingman from the Church. That is what it has cost the Church.

As this alienating process has been going on for a generation we may expect that the work of recovery will be the work of a generation. The work cannot be done by sentiment, it cannot be done through any reversion to paternalism, above all it cannot be done in haste. As Bagehot has pointed

out, haste is the vice of philanthropy. "To act rightly in modern society requires a great deal of previous study, a great deal of assimilated information, a great deal of sharpened imagination; and these perquisites of sound action require much time, much 'lying in the sun.'"[1] There must be much patience, much toleration, much faith, and very much plain speaking; for it is not to be assumed for a moment that prejudice, or violence, or any kind of wrong thinking or wrong doing, on the part of labor, is to be condoned. Movements like that of the Civic Federation, or legislation looking toward conciliation, are suggestive, but no specific is here urged. It has been assumed that the business laymen of the Church are impatient of instruction as to their business relations. No attempt, therefore, has been made in these pages to show precisely how these relations with the alienated classes are to be

[1] Bagehot, *Physics and Politics*, p. 188.

improved. Insistence has been placed upon the manifest need of recovering the alienated classes, and upon the application of the intelligence of the business layman to this point as a part of his business. The responsibility for such moral adjustments of the economic system as shall remove the present causes of alienation and distrust on the part of workingmen, has been laid upon the laymen of the Church. A long step in advance will have been taken when the responsibility in this matter has been recognized and accepted. Who can doubt the final result, if the laity of the Church, who represent so largely the business of the country, shall prove faithful to the ministry of human sympathy in its application to this most difficult, if not otherwise inaccessible, task now before the Church?

The Church has a further and very abundant occasion for its ministry of human sympathy in connection with the distribu-

tion of foreign immigrants throughout the country. Religious hospitality may take either of two forms on the part of the Protestant churches. When the religious antecedents warrant, the religious immigrant may be given a home in any church of his choice, or he may be aided directly in maintaining his own order of worship. The Protestant churches are by no means remiss in the exercise of this form of hospitality. Far-reaching provision has been made in behalf of those accessible to Protestant influence, through the churches directly, and no less effectively through schools, colleges, and seminaries adjusted to their uses.

There is another type of religious hospitality which can find expression only in a certain sympathetic attitude toward the religious immigrant, whatever may have been his previous affiliations. This means that we ought to be ready to give thanks that the immigrant is usually religious and

that he brings his religion with him. We are the rather inclined to wish, that if he must come, he would leave that behind him. And if by chance we learn that he has in any numbers broken away from his religious environment, or is in revolt against it, we are apt to count that fact altogether in his favor. Whereas the fact to be considered and approved is that the religious life of the immigrant is the best contribution which he has made, and in present circumstances the best which he can make to the country of his adoption. Instead of antagonizing it we ought to guard it, not in form but in spirit, and make sure that he transmits it to his children. If we Americanize the children of the immigrant out of the religion of their fathers, leaving upon their minds the impression that religious freedom means irreligion, we are simply exchanging a possible asset of great value to citizenship for a sure danger and risk to it.

Herein consists the chief responsibility of the public schools of the great cities. I suppose that the teachers in the elementary schools of the foreign sections of New York and Chicago are doing more than any equal number of persons to determine the moral future of the country. I have reason to believe that they are proving adequate to their task. The name "teacher" is a household word in the new families. The sympathy, the trustworthiness, the moral authority of "teacher" is assumed in the home, as well as by the child. Doubtless many a teacher has learned her own lesson of respect for the sacredness of things which are sacred. The public school cannot teach religious doctrine; it can, under its limitations and because of them, do a greater thing, — it can teach reverence.

Reference ought also to be made to the work of the social settlement in the assimilation of the foreign population in the cities.

This work is much more advanced than that of the public schools. It follows the really domesticated immigrant into his social and civic relations. It helps him to discriminate between the good and the bad agencies in the new civilization which he is trying to understand. It introduces him to wider opportunities than he would otherwise discover. Above all, it enables him to utilize himself as a force for the social good, to realize the fact that he has much to give as well as to receive. The work of the social settlement, however, like that of the public school, can only be referred to in the way of illustration, as it cannot fairly be claimed as an agency of the Church, though often originating under its incentives.

As the tide of immigration is now beginning to flow from eastern Europe, another and less familiar type of religious life is beginning to appear in our cities. It is estimated that there are already nearly half a

million of the members of the Greek Catholic Church in this country. The new immigration introduces new nationalities and races as well as a new form of religion — nationalities and races which seem more alien than any which have preceded. There is very much danger that the Protestant churches will allow the strangeness, and the undesirableness, in some respects, of the new immigrant to affect their understanding and appreciation of his religious spirit. What if it shall prove that the Slavonic race, imbued with the spirit of its own form of Christianity, has a contribution of essential value to make to American Christianity? Some years ago Dr. George Washburn, then president of Robert College, writing on "The Coming of the Slav"[1] especially in relation to European civilization, gave the following résumé of an address by a young Slav. "The Latin and the

[1] *The Contemporary Review*, January, 1898.

Teutonic races have had their day, and they have failed to establish a truly Christian civilization. They have done great things in the organization of society, in the development of material wealth, in literature, art, and science, and especially in recognizing and securing in some degree the rights of the individual man; but they have exalted the material above the spiritual and made Mammon their God. They have lost the nobler aspirations of youth, and are governed now by the sordid calculations of old age. We are waiting the coming of the Slav to regenerate Europe, establish the principle of universal brotherhood and the Kingdom of Christ on the earth." Without indorsing this statement of the Slav orator, either as history or as prophecy, Dr. Washburn proceeded to give the following testimony to the Slav peasant — the man who is now appearing among us as an immigrant. "In his religious character, at least,

the Moujik is the most original and most interesting peasant in Europe. He has grave faults and weaknesses, like other men; but his peculiar virtues, his pathetic endurance of suffering, his profound sympathy with humanity, his faith in voluntary self-sacrifice, his very dreams of destiny, commend him to the sympathy of all the world. He does not seem to belong to the matter-of-fact world of the nineteenth century. . . . The Moujik has a sublime spirit of self-sacrifice. He will sacrifice anything for what he conceives to be his duty. This spirit of self-sacrifice does not manifest itself alone in great and exceptional deeds of heroism, but in daily life."

It is an unseemly thing for a Christian nation which invites and stimulates immigration to estimate the immigrant simply by his value as an unskilled laborer. But as the quality of his religious life is in most cases the only other contribution of imme-

diate value which he brings, it is for the Church to estimate this quality aright, and to apprise the nation of its value. Evidently there is a growing need of the broader cultivation of the art of religious hospitality.

The opportunity for the exercise of the ministry of sympathy in connection with the incoming of immigrants from the more remote and alien peoples of Christendom suggests the much wider opportunity for its exercise in connection with the work of foreign missions. It is evident that success in the further prosecution of this work depends more than formerly upon the kind of spirit in which it is carried on. The time has come when the non-Christian peoples, if they are to be reached, must be made to feel not only the ardor and aggressiveness of Christian love but also its fine restraints. It must be recognized more completely that the gateway through which all must pass, who would do good in any way to their fellow

men, is humility. So our Lord came to us. "He humbled himself." Unfortunately the great missionary nations of the Protestant faith are not humble nations. The characteristics of love which Paul so much exalts are not the characteristics most in evidence in the United States, Great Britain, or Germany. "Love vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, does not behave itself unseemly, is not provoked . . . beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things." The missionary, however humble he may be in spirit or in practice, is obliged to do his work against the conspicuous background of national pride and arrogance. This grievous inconsistency is becoming so widespread and obstructive that it raises the question whether the Church itself is sufficiently possessed of the divine quality of sympathy to prosecute its missionary work in a becoming spirit. The exercise of sympathy implies the habit, the

gift. Ungifted persons are apt to be awkward and ineffective in their attempts at sympathy. This is not a question of manners. Sympathy will somehow declare itself when it is the compelling motive. Is sympathy a sufficiently dominant and compelling part of the missionary motive in the churches? Love for the world does not necessarily mean sympathy with men, nations, and races. It may not be simply and intensely human. Not infrequently it is associated with a certain sense of superiority which may be congruous with pity, but which is incongruous with sympathy.

In so far as Protestantism was taken possession of by Puritanism, as in the early history of this country, it grew perceptibly unsympathetic in tone. The Puritan did not ask for sympathy. Sympathy seemed to him to be debilitating to faith. He preferred to think, to act, and to suffer alone. So he naturally developed a strong, virile, self-

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reliant, and, at certain points, self-assertive type of religion. His theology was self-centred, in that it bore the distinctive marks of independent thinking. He did not hesitate to think his thoughts through to their logical, and therefore to him their final conclusion. The old New England theology did indeed allow so-called "improvements," but only because it was haunted by the idea of perfection. This independence and persistence of thought was justified by a willingness to take the fortune of beliefs and convictions. All the greater acts of the Puritan in his religious and political life were due to the sure and quick sequence of duty following upon belief. The motive power was always in his beliefs much more than in his sympathies. In his struggles and sufferings for liberty, he struggled and suffered for principles rather than for men. He really loved principles more than he loved men. The passion of his soul worked in that way.

When, therefore, the doctrine — the principle — of a universal atonement became incorporated into his religious belief, the magnificent sequence of duty was foreign missions.

The impulse to foreign missions, in this country, did not spring out of the knowledge of the world. The early missionaries did not know the world of their time, neither did the Church which sent them forth. The world which is to us so human, was to them altogether a theological world. It was a world over which the imagination could brood, reaching the sympathies through preconceived views of human nature rather than through contact with individual lives. Men everywhere were one and alike, moral units under the bondage of sin, and in the scheme of salvation. Foreign missions could have had no nobler or more impressive origin than under such a vast generalization as was then possible, having its practical

outcome in the idealization of man as a spiritual being. Every human soul stood forth in its own solitary grandeur, undiminished by the degradation, and unexalted by the glory, of its environment.

How can the missionary motive be perpetuated under the new realistic knowledge of the world, a world so near and so close, so differentiated by races and nations, so specialized by religions, so individualized by the names and deeds of men which are borne from land to land? The effect of this new knowledge has not yet reached to the depth of the missionary motive. Curiosity respecting our fellow men has been measurably satisfied, at least it has passed over into the more dignified processes of scientific investigation. We are fairly well advanced in the study of races and of religions. The utilization of the new knowledge in the interest of trade, measures more than anything else the interest of the more developed in the less

developed nations. We are with one accord "exploiting" the backward peoples. In certain conspicuous instances we have reached the stage of recognition, fair treatment, and coöperation. As civilization spreads, some of the obligations of civilization are accepted. But how far removed are these results of the new knowledge of the world measured by their effect upon the missionary motive! Where is the equivalent of the idealization of the human soul to be found? Or assuming that we are not to look for its equivalent, holding it still as indispensable, where are we to look for its supports in our realistic knowledge of men and of their environment?

The new knowledge of the world cannot reach to the depth of the missionary motive except as it goes far enough to awaken the fellow-feeling in the heart of Christian peoples, the sense of oneness in sin, the sense of sympathy in struggle and aspiration and hope. There are manifest gradations in evil

mindedness and in evil doing. This has been revealed by our larger knowledge of the world. We can see that we of the more virile Christian peoples have outgrown the lower and more cruel sins of the primitive races, and that we have not attained to the more subtle and refined art of sinning, characteristic of the older civilizations. We can see how perilously near we still are to the sins which we have escaped, and also what possibilities of sin lie before us. Our knowledge ought to give us a very deep and wide sense of the meaning of the fellowship of sin. The missionary motive cannot start from above or outside the experience of this fellowship. If men have no needs or wants commensurate with Christianity, why try to give them Christianity instead of civilization? If we have been civilized only, how can we give them Christianity? The missionary is really the deepest interpreter of humanity who is at work to-day in the

world. He is doing more than any other sort of man to break through the superficialities of civilization. He is the medium of exchange between men the world over whose conscious needs are the deepest, and whose spiritual aspirations are the highest. For this reason the relative place of the missionary in the Church is rising, and also his relative influence in the world. The world is beginning to recognize and acknowledge the effect of his fundamental, because sympathetic, work in human nature, as it passes so often beyond results in the individual life into the life of communities and states. It is seen more and more to be of the kind which leads up to constructive statesmanship. The Church finds in him the most unrelenting foe to prejudice, — ecclesiastical, national, or racial, — and its most effective leader out of provincialism. He is the antidote against the benumbing effect of an easy and careless toler-

ation, quickening and stimulating the real sympathies of the mind and heart of the Church. In these days of specialized service, his ministry is that of teaching man to know man, interpreting as well as investigating humanity, helping the Church to keep faith with its own ideals, and thereby helping the world to believe in the necessity and efficiency of the Church. The ministry of human sympathy has its clearest opportunity to-day in the work of foreign missions, and its clearest exemplification in the interpretative power of the far-sighted missionary.

There are other ministries that fall within the scope of the Church, which will be missed in the foregoing treatment of its function in modern society. I should doubtless accept those which might be added, and agree with the estimate which might be placed upon them. There is the ministry pertaining to spiritual devotion and wor-

ship, the ministry of religious education, the ministry concerned with the protection and development of the family (more than ever resting upon the Church), and the constant ministry of charity both personal and organized: to which some would add the ministry of healing, a very delicate kind of ministry, to be recalled only in view of the present deficiency of medical science on the spiritual side, when compared with its wonderful advance on the material side. These are all in and of the Church, its own by historic right and by continuous service. But I have wished to put the emphasis upon those ministries which seem to be most urgent and imperative — the more urgent and imperative because they have been allowed to lapse in some degree according to the reasons which have been given. There is an unmistakable call for the resumption of the ministry of spiritual authority, and also for the recovery of the ministry of

human sympathy. When these ministries shall have been restored to their normal efficiency, it will be a more gracious task to take a survey of the complete function of the Church in modern society: to show how under the separation of Church and State in this country the Church is vitally affecting the State; to show how under the vast increase of moral agencies both individual and corporate the Church remains the great moral agency of society; to show how under the growth of population, and in the midst of rapid changes, the Church has maintained its relative growth and adjusted itself with greater gain than loss to changed conditions; in a word, to take a fair and just measurement of the modern Church according to the great dimensions which are visible and well defined, — its length and its breadth. It has been the single object of this present study to measure its depth.

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